

# Colorectal Cancer Screening

## Fact Sheet for Health Care Providers



### What is the Impact of Colorectal Cancer?

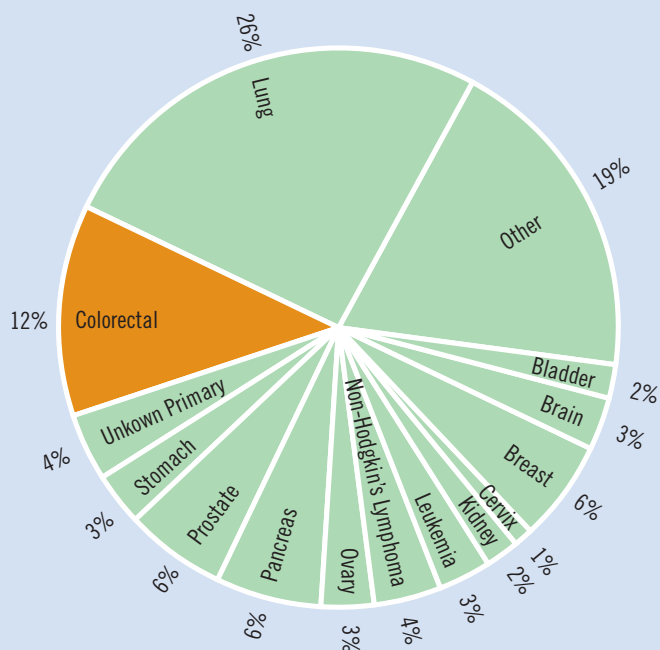
In Canada:

- It is the second leading cause of death from cancer for both men and women combined <sup>[4, 8, 11]</sup>
- It is the third most commonly diagnosed cancer <sup>[4, 10, 11]</sup>
- In 2007, an estimated 20,800 people (11,400 men, 9400 women) were diagnosed with colorectal cancer and 8700 (4700 men, 4000 women) died from it <sup>[4]</sup>
- It accounts for 13.8% of estimated new cancer cases and 12.2% of cancer deaths for men <sup>[4, 11]</sup>
- It accounts for 12.2% of estimated new cancer cases and 11.7% of cancer deaths for women <sup>[4, 11]</sup>

In Alberta:

- It is the second leading cause of death from cancer for both men and women combined <sup>[2]</sup>
- It is the fourth most commonly diagnosed cancer, and the second most commonly diagnosed cancer in men <sup>[2]</sup>
- In 2007, an estimated 1,670 people (950 men, 720 women) were diagnosed and 610 (340 men, 270 women) died from it <sup>[4]</sup>
- It accounts for 12% of estimated new cancer cases and 12% of cancer deaths for men and women <sup>[2]</sup>

Cancer deaths by site, Alberta 2004 <sup>[2]</sup>



In Canada

- Colorectal cancer will develop in 1 in 14 men and 1 in 16 women throughout their lifetime <sup>[4]</sup>
- The lifetime risk of dying from colorectal cancer is 1 in 28 men and 1 in 32 women <sup>[4]</sup>

In Alberta

- Colorectal cancer will develop in 1 in 14 men and 1 in 17 women throughout their lifetime <sup>[2]</sup>
- The lifetime risk of dying from colorectal cancer is 1 in 27 men and 1 in 34 women <sup>[2]</sup>

# Alberta Colorectal Cancer Screening Program Fact Sheet for Health Care Providers



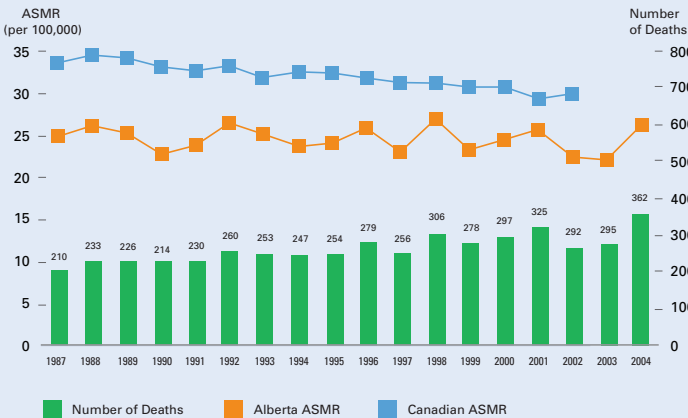
## What are the Outcomes of Colorectal Cancer?

In Canada:

- Mortality rates continue to decline in both men and women with a decrease of 1.3% and 1.7% respectively between 1994-2003 <sup>[4, 11]</sup>
- Incidence rates are stable in both men and women with an increase of 0.3% in men and decrease of 0.8% in women between 1994-2003 <sup>[4, 11]</sup>
- The Potential Years of Life Lost (PYLL) due to colorectal cancer was 12% in men and 10.2% in women in 2003 <sup>[4]</sup>
- The Five-year Relative Survival Ratio for colorectal cancer in both men and women of all ages diagnosed in 1996-1998 was 60% <sup>[4]</sup>
- The estimated 2007 Age-Standardized Incidence Rates for colorectal cancer were 62 men and 41 women per 100,000 <sup>[4]</sup>
- The estimated 2007 Age-Standardized Mortality Rates for colorectal cancer were 26 men and 16 women per 100,000 <sup>[4]</sup>

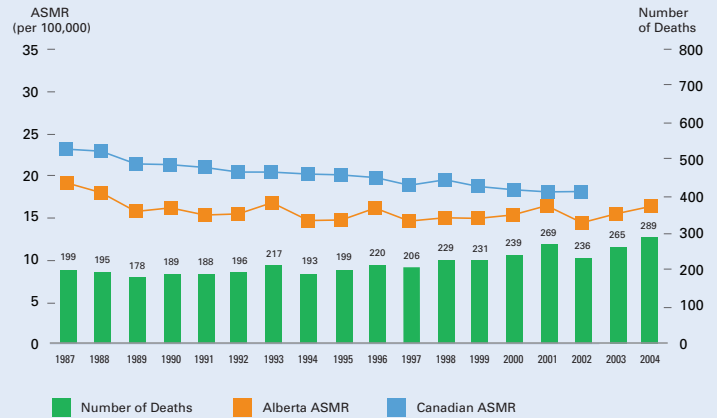
In Alberta:

- The Five-year Relative Survival Ratio from colorectal cancer in both men and women of all ages diagnosed in 1996-1998 was 58% <sup>[4]</sup>
- The estimated 2007 Age-Standardized Incidence Rates for colorectal cancer were 59 men and 38 women per 100,000 <sup>[4]</sup>
- The estimated 2007 Age-Standardized Mortality Rates for colorectal cancer were 22 men and 13 women per 100,000 <sup>[4]</sup>



**Number of deaths for male invasive colorectal cancer, Alberta (1987-2004):**

Comparing age-standardized mortality rates (ASMR) in Alberta with rates in Canada <sup>[2]</sup>



**Number of deaths for female invasive colorectal cancer, Alberta (1987-2004):**

Comparing age-standardized mortality rates (ASMR) in Alberta with rates in Canada <sup>[2]</sup>

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## What are the Risk Factors for Colorectal Cancer?

**Non-modifiable** (unchangeable) risk factors for developing colorectal cancer <sup>[1, 2, 7, 9]</sup>

- Age
  - > Risk increases with age
  - > About 90% of people who develop colorectal cancer are over the age of 50
- Family History
  - > Risk increases when more relatives have the disease
  - > A small portion may inherit genetic susceptibility with 1% from Familial Adenomatous Polyposis (FAP) and 3–4% from Hereditary Non-Polyposis Colorectal Cancer (HNPCC)
- Gender
  - > Men and women have similar risks of developing colon cancer, but men are two times more likely to develop rectal cancer
- Previous Cancer History
  - > Risk increases with a personal history of cancer, including uterine, ovarian, breast, or small bowels
- Ulcerative Colitis and Crohn's Disease
- Diabetes Mellitus

**Modifiable** (changeable) risk factors for developing colorectal cancer <sup>[1, 2, 7, 9]</sup>

- Diet
  - > Risk decreases with increased fiber, fruits, and vegetables intake
  - > Decreasing the intake of refined sugars and animal fats and having moderate/low alcohol consumption can also reduce the risk
- Physical Activity
  - > Risk decreases by up to 30%-40% with increased physical activity
- Body Weight
  - > Risk decreases with maintaining a healthy body weight
- Tobacco
  - > Risk decreases with being smoke and tobacco free

## What is Colorectal Cancer Screening?

- Screening for colorectal cancer can reduce both incidence and mortality <sup>[12, 13]</sup>
- Annual or biennial FOBT in the periodic health examinations of asymptomatic individuals aged 50 to 74 is recommended <sup>[1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13]</sup>
- FOBT can reduce colorectal cancer mortality by 15-33% <sup>[3, 5, 12, 13]</sup>
- Follow up colonoscopy for a positive FOBT results is recommended <sup>[1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13]</sup>
  - > If colonoscopy is performed as a screening test, repeat colonoscopy is recommended in 10 years for negative results <sup>[1, 2]</sup>
  - > If Flexible Sigmoidoscopy (FS) is performed as a screening test, repeat FS is recommended in 5 years for negative results <sup>[1, 2]</sup>
  - > If Double Contrast Barium Enema (DCBE) is performed as a screening test, repeat DCBE is recommended in 10 years for negative results <sup>[1, 2]</sup>

## Who is Getting Screened for Colorectal Cancer?

In Canada:

- Overall, less than 15% of individuals over the age of 50 report getting screened by FOBT within 2 years <sup>[11]</sup>

In Alberta:

- Less than 15% of individuals aged 50 to 74 report getting screened by FOBT within 2 years <sup>[10]</sup>
- The Alberta Colorectal Cancer Screening Program is a province-wide organized, population-based cancer screening program that aims to improve the early detection of colorectal cancer and save the lives of Albertans who may be at risk <sup>[1]</sup>

# Alberta Colorectal Cancer Screening Program Fact Sheet for Health Care Providers



- Alberta Colorectal Cancer Screening Program implementation activities include <sup>[1]</sup>
  - > Developing and distributing information and education materials to the public and health care providers
  - > Engaging directly and indirectly in recruitment activities with the target populations
  - > Providing direct communication to program participants and their health care providers regarding the need for screening, screening test results, follow-up diagnostic tests, and reminders when screening is overdue
  - > Monitoring and reporting on the quality of program services
  - > Making improvements to the program based on feedback and evaluation

## Where can I get more information about the Alberta Colorectal Cancer Screening Program?

For more information please contact:

Alberta Health Services  
Cancer Screening Programs  
Holy Cross Site  
2202 – 2nd Street S.W.  
Calgary, Alberta T2S 3C1

Tel 1-866-727-3926  
Fax 1-888-.944-3388  
cancerscreening@cancerboard.ab.ca

Visit:  
cancerboard.ab.ca/PS  
screeningforlife.ca

## References

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